

PHD NSWC dedicates new Combat System Integration Laboratory

PHD NSWC celebrated the completion of the new RADM John D. Beecher Combat System Integration Laboratory in a dedication ceremony held on 31 October. Hundreds were present to witness the festivities, including Congressman Elton Gallegly (23rd District) and other local politicians; members of the PHD NSWC Flag Advisory Board including RADM Wayne E. Meyer and RADM C. J. Rorie; and RADM Beecher's family.

"We can be sure that the completion of this laboratory represents a vast improvement in the available facilities and it will allow the fleet to take full advantage of our expertise and the services we offer," said Mr. Giacchi as he explained the significance of the new building.

After dedication speeches by CAPT Maiorano, Mr. Giacchi, and Congressman Gallegly, Mr. Giacchi and CAPT Maiorano presented RADM Beecher's family with flowers and a framed sketch of RADM Beecher. The Beecher family took center stage at the podium to say a few words of thanks and commemoration.

"This is a great honor for our family and we're delighted to be here," said Mrs. Beecher-Benson. The children acknowledged the honor and thanked the command for the distinguished honor bestowed upon their father.

The ceremonial party then proceeded to the front doors of the new laboratory for the ribbon-cutting event. Joan Beecher-Benson and her children were visibly touched by the ceremony.

The new 72,000 square foot structure will house the PHD NSWC engineers, logisticians, and technicians responsible for ensuring safe and effective performance of the fleet weapon systems that transform Navy ships into a key part of national defense. The main feature of the facility will be a 6,300 square foot Engineering and Computer Center that will allow PHD NSWC personnel to link to ships in real-time providing consistent, reliable, and real-time support for Sailors at sea. The \$9,647,117 contract was awarded in May 2001 and broke ground in August 2001.

RADM Beecher, a 1952 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, had a long and successful naval career serving with distinction at sea and ashore. He served as PHD NSWC Director of Engineering from 1972 – 1975. In 1991, he was chosen as the recipient of the PHD NSWC Distinguished Alumni Award. He made an immeasurable contribution to the successes and positive reputation of PHD NSWC and whose causes he continued to support long after his departure from the command. RADM Beecher largely defined in-service engineering as it is practiced today.

